

Appeals court weighs Trump arguments to withhold records

By NOMAAN MERCHANT

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A panel of judges on Tuesday questioned whether they had the authority to grant former President Donald Trump's demands and stop the White House from allowing the release of documents related to the Jan. 6 insurrection led by Trump's supporters.

But the judges also noted that there may be times when a former president would be justified in trying to stop the incumbent from disclosing records.

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit heard arguments from lawyers for Trump and the House committee seeking the records as part of its investigation into the Capitol riot. Trump's attorneys want the court to reverse a federal judge's ruling allowing the National Archives and Records Ad-

ministration to turn over the records after President Joe Biden waived executive privilege.

Trump supporters broke into the Capitol on Jan. 6 after a rally near the White House where he made false claims of election fraud and challenged them to "fight like hell." About 700 people have been federally charged. Nine people died during and after the rioting.

The National Archives has said that the records Trump wants to block include presidential diaries, visitor logs, speech drafts, handwritten notes "concerning the events of January 6" from the files of former chief of staff Mark Meadows, and "a draft Executive Order on the topic of election integrity."

Compared to U.S. District Judge Tanya Chutkan, whose ruling Trump is contesting, the three judges



In this Jan. 6, 2021, photo, insurrections loyal to President Donald Trump riot outside the Capitol in Washington.

Associated Press

on the appeals court spent relatively little time weighing the importance of the documents themselves. They instead focused most

of the hearing Tuesday on what role federal courts should have when an incumbent president and former president are at

odds over records from the former's administration.

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Appeals court weighs Trump arguments to withhold records

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The judges sharply questioned both sides and challenged them with hypothetical scenarios.

To Trump's lawyers, Judge Patricia Millett suggested a situation where a current president negotiating with a foreign leader needed to know what promises a former president had made to that leader. The incumbent might seek to release a transcript of a phone call or other records from the previous administration for national security reasons, the judge said.

"To be clear, your position is a former president could come in and file a lawsuit?" Millett said. Trump lawyer Justin Clark responded, "That is our position."

To a lawyer for the House committee, Millett raised a scenario where a newly elected president might seek retribution against a disliked predecessor. The new president and a Congress led by the same party might declare that there was a national security interest in releasing all of the former president's records, even at the risk of endangering people's lives, she said.

"Needless to say, the former president comes to court, (says), 'Hang on,'" Millett said. "What happens?"

She did not say she was referring to any president and rejected committee

lawyer Douglas Letter's response referencing a president who "fomented an insurrection."

Barack Obama. Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson is a Biden appointee seen as a contender for a Supreme

Court. Despite Trump's false claims about a stolen election, the results were con-

Trump and his allies have fought the committee in court and in Congress by claiming that the former president can still exert executive privilege to prevent cooperation. Their efforts have delayed for months the production of key information to the committee. Former chief of staff Meadows and former adviser Steve Bannon have resisted efforts by the House panel to obtain documents and question them about possible meetings with Trump before the riot. The Justice Department has indicted Bannon on a contempt of Congress charge. Meadows, seeking to avoid the same, is now cooperating on a limited basis, the committee's chairman said Tuesday.

In their appeal to the circuit court, Trump's lawyers said they agreed with Chutkan that presidents were not kings who must not be challenged. "True, but in that same vein, Congress is not Parliament — a legislative body with supreme and unchecked constitutional power over the operations of government," they wrote.

Trump has argued that records of his deliberations on Jan. 6 must be withheld to protect executive privilege for future presidents and that the Democrat-led House is primarily driven by politics. The House committee's lawyers rejected those arguments and called Trump's attempts to assert executive privilege "unprecedented and deeply flawed."

"It is difficult to imagine a more critical subject for Congressional investigation, and Mr. Trump's arguments cannot overcome Congress's pressing need," the committee's lawyers said. □



President Donald Trump speaks during a rally protesting the electoral college certification of Joe Biden as President in Washington on Jan. 6, 2021.

Associated Press

"We're not going to make it that easy," she said.

Letter argued the determination of a current president should outweigh predecessors in almost all circumstances and noted that both Biden and Congress were in agreement that the Jan. 6 records should be turned over.

"It would be astonishing for this court to override the current president and Congress," Letter said.

Democratic presidents nominated all three judges who heard arguments Tuesday. Millett and Judge Robert Wilkins were nominated by former President

Court seat should one open during the current administration.

Jackson said Tuesday that she questioned whether judges should intervene in a dispute where the executive and legislative branches agree but a former president doesn't.

"The court swooping in to do some sort of balancing test ... actually raises its own separation of powers concerns in terms of the power of the court to resolve or to second-guess what this executive is saying," she said. Given the stakes of the case, either side is likely to appeal to the Supreme

firm by state officials and upheld by courts. The last attorney general appointed by Trump, William Barr, has said the Justice Department found no evidence of widespread fraud.

In explaining why Biden has not shielded Trump's records, White House counsel Dana Remus has written that they could "shed light on events within the White House on and about January 6 and bear on the Select Committee's need to understand the facts underlying the most serious attack on the operations of the Federal Government since the Civil War."



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Court upholds California ban on high-capacity magazines

By DON THOMPSON

Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP)—

The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals overturned a ruling by two of its judges and upheld California's ban on high-capacity magazines Tuesday in a split decision that may be headed for the U.S. Supreme Court.

"The statute outlaws no weapon, but only limits the size of the magazine that may be used with firearms," the court said in the 7-4 ruling.

The majority reasoned that "the record demonstrates that the limitation interferes only minimally with the core right of self-defense, as there is no evidence that anyone ever has been unable to defend his or her home and family due to the lack of a large-capacity magazine; and that the limitation saves lives."

The 11-member panel of the San Francisco-based court acted after two of three judges on a smaller 9th Circuit panel last year ruled the state's ban on magazines holding more than 10 bullets violates the U.S. Constitution's protection of the right to bear firearms.

Gunowners' rights groups plan to appeal the ruling to the U.S. Supreme Court. They have been trying to get firearms cases before a high court that tilts more to the right because of appointments by former President Donald Trump.

9th Circuit Judge Patrick Bumatay, who was appointed by Trump, wrote a dissent and said large-capacity magazines are "commonly used" by Americans for self-defense. "Indeed, these magazines are lawfully owned by millions of people nationwide and come standard on the most popular firearms sold today," he wrote.

"If California's law applied nationwide, it would require confiscating half of all existing firearms magazines in this country."

His dissent was joined by two other judges, while a fourth judge wrote a separate dissenting opinion.

The majority decision



In this Dec. 27, 2012, file photo, a variety of military-style semi-automatic rifles obtained during a buy back program are displayed at Los Angeles police headquarters.

Associated Press

hinged in part on which legal standard should be used to determine the outcome, and the 9th Circuit's majority chose the more stringent standard.

It found that "intermediate scrutiny applied because the ban imposed only a minimal burden on the core Second Amendment right to keep and bear arms."

Gun rights groups hope the Supreme Court will select a lower legal standard for Second Amendment cases in an upcoming decision on a New York law restricting concealed weapons.

"We're disappointed but not surprised that this particular 11-judge panel had the numbers to overturn the lower court decision. But the fight is far from over," said Chuck Michel, the California Rifle & Pistol Association's president and general counsel. Seven judges on the 9th Circuit panel were appointed by Democratic presidents.

"The panel is bitterly factioned, and the dissenting judges are all suggesting that the Supreme Court needs to take this case to explain how a Second Amendment challenge should be reviewed," he said.

He called California's ban on large-capacity magazines a commonsense way to confront "an epidemic" of gun violence "including devastating mass shoot-

ings."

Bonta noted that the court's majority said every mass shooting with 20

or more deaths in the last 50 years involved large-capacity magazines, as did about three-quarters of those with 10 or more deaths.

More than twice as many people were killed or injured in mass shootings with high-capacity magazines than those with less firepower, the court said.

Jonathan Lowy, chief counsel and vice president for legal at the Brady gun control advocacy group said the court's majority rightly held that "the Constitution, properly understood, does not prevent Americans from enacting the gun laws they want and need to protect their families and communities, and it does not entitle people to weapons of war." □

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Authorities: Student kills 3, wounds 8 at Michigan school

By **MIKE HOUSEHOLDER**
and **RYAN KRYSKA**

Associated Press

OXFORD TOWNSHIP, Mich.

(AP) — A 15-year-old sophomore opened fire at his Michigan high school on Tuesday, killing three students and wounding eight other people, including at least one teacher, authorities said.

Oakland County Under-sheriff Mike McCabe said at a news conference that investigators were still trying to determine a motive for the shooting at Oxford High School in Oxford Township, a community of about 22,000 people roughly 30 miles (48 kilometers) north of Detroit.

He said he was aware of allegations circulating on social media that there had been threats of a shooting at the roughly 1,700-student school prior to Tuesday's attack, but he cautioned against believing that narrative until investigators can look into it.

Authorities didn't immediately release the suspect's name, but McCabe said deputies arrested him without incident within minutes of arriving at the school in response to a flood of 911 calls about the attack, which happened shortly before 1 p.m. He said the deputies also recovered the semi-automatic handgun and several clips the suspect used in the attack. "He fired multiple shots," McCabe said. "Somewhere in the area of 15 to



Parents walk away with their kids from the Meijer's parking lot, where many students gathered following an active shooter situation at Oxford High School, Tuesday, Nov. 30, 2021, in Oxford, Mich.

20."

The three students who were killed were a 16-year-old boy and two girls, ages 14 and 17, McCabe said. Two of the wounded were undergoing surgery as of 5 p.m. and the six others who were wounded were in stable condition, he said.

McCabe said the suspect's parents visited their son where he's being held and advised him not to talk to investigators, as is his right. Police have to seek permission from a juvenile suspect's parents or guardian to speak with them, he added.

McCabe said he wasn't aware of any prior run-ins the suspect had with law enforcement or if he had any disciplinary history at school.

Gov. Gretchen Whitmer also spoke at the news conference, saying, "I think this is every parent's worst

nightmare," while choking up.

The school was placed on lockdown after the attack, with some children sheltering in locked classrooms while officers searched the premises. They were later taken to a nearby Meijer grocery store to be picked up by their parents.

Isabel Flores, a 15-year-old ninth grader, told WJBK-TV that she and other students heard gunshots and saw another student bleeding from the face. They then ran from the area through the rear of the school, she said.

McCabe said investigators would be poring over the school's video footage and looking through social media posts for any evidence of a possible motive.

A concerned parent, Robin Redding, said her son, Treshan Bryant, is a 12th grader at the school but stayed

home on Tuesday. She said he had heard threats that there could be a shooting. "This couldn't be just random," she said.

Redding didn't provide specifics about what her son had heard, but she expressed concern with school safety in general.

"Kids just, like they're just mad at each other at this school," she said.

Bryant said he texted several younger cousins in the morning and they said they didn't want to go to school, and he got a bad feeling. He asked his mom if he could do his assignments online.

Bryant said he had heard vague threats "for a long time now" about plans for a shooting at the school.

"You're not supposed to play about that," he said of the threats. "This is real life." School administrators posted two letters to parents

on the school's website this month, saying they were responding to rumors of a threat against the school following a bizarre vandalism incident.

According to a Nov. 4 letter written by Principal Steve Wolf, someone threw a deer head into a courtyard from the school's roof, painted several windows on the roof with red acrylic paint and used the same paint on concrete near the school building.

Without specifically referencing that incident, a second post on Nov. 12 assured "there has been no threat to our building nor our students."

"We are aware of the numerous rumors that have been circulating throughout our building this week. We understand that has created some concern for students and parents," the administrators wrote.

"Please know that we have reviewed every concern shared with us and investigated all information provided. Some rumors have evolved from an incident last week, while others do not appear to have any connection. Student interpretations of social media posts and false information have exacerbated the overall concern."

McCabe said the incident with the deer head was "absolutely unrelated" to Tuesday's shooting.

"That was a different incident, different student," he said. □

Appeals court orders release of some Mueller report passages



Former special counsel Robert Mueller testifies on Capitol Hill in Washington before the House Judiciary Committee hearing on his report on Russian election interference on July 24, 2019.

Associated Press

By **ERIC TUCKER**

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A

federal appeals court on Tuesday directed the Justice Department to disclose certain redacted passages from special counsel Robert Mueller's Russia investigation report that relate to individuals who were investigated by prosecutors but not ultimately charged. The ruling came in a public records complaint from the news organization BuzzFeed, which sued for an unredacted version of Mueller's report

examining Russian election interference and possible ties to Donald Trump's 2016 presidential campaign.

The Mueller report explained how prosecutors looking at potential campaign finance crimes investigated a 2016 Trump Tower meeting at which Trump Jr. expected to receive pejorative information about his father's Democratic opponent, Hillary Clinton, from a Russian lawyer. "The redacted passages contain no new facts; they contain no new information or descriptions of

conduct that have not been made public elsewhere in this very Report. The privacy interests, then, are not robust, as no additional reputational or stigmatizing harm can result from the disclosure of the information contained therein," said the opinion from Judge Karen LeCraft Henderson. Other requested information can remain redacted, she said, because it contains "additional facts about individuals that are not disclosed or even intimated elsewhere in the Report." □

Putin warns West: Moscow has 'red line' about Ukraine, NATO

By VLADIMIR ISACHENKOV
Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — Russian President Vladimir Putin on Tuesday sternly warned NATO against deploying its troops and weapons to Ukraine, saying it represents a red line for Russia and would trigger a strong response.

Commenting on Western concerns about Russia's alleged intention to invade Ukraine, he said that Moscow is equally worried about NATO drills near its borders.

Speaking to participants of an online investment forum, Putin said that NATO's eastward expansion has threatened Russia's core security interests. He expressed concern that NATO could eventually use the Ukrainian territory to deploy missiles capable of reaching Moscow in just five minutes. "The emergence of such threats represents a 'red line' for us," Putin said. "I hope that it will not get to that and common sense and responsibility for their own countries and the global community will eventually prevail."

He added that Russia has been forced to counter the growing threats by developing new hypersonic weapons. "What should we do?" Putin said. "We would need to develop something similar to target those who threaten us. And we can do that even now."



Russian President Vladimir Putin attends a video call of the VTB Capital "Russia Calling!" Investment Forum in Moscow, Russia, Tuesday, Nov. 30, 2021.

He said a new hypersonic missile that is set to enter service with the Russian navy early next year would be capable of reaching targets in comparable time.

"It would also need just five minutes to reach those who issue orders," Putin said. The Zircon hypersonic cruise missile, capable of flying at nine times the speed of sound to a range of 1,000 kilometers (620 miles), has undergone a series of tests, most recently Monday.

Ukrainian and Western officials have expressed worries this month that a Russian military buildup near Ukraine could signal plans

by Moscow to invade its ex-Soviet neighbor. NATO foreign ministers warned Russia on Tuesday that any attempt to further destabilize Ukraine would be a costly mistake.

The Kremlin has insisted it has no such intention and has accused Ukraine and its Western backers of making the claims to cover up their own allegedly aggressive designs.

Russia annexed Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula in 2014 after the country's Kremlin-friendly president was driven from power by mass protests and also threw its weight behind a separatist insurgency that broke out

in Ukraine's east.

Earlier this year, a spike in cease-fire violations in the east and a Russian troop concentration near Ukraine fueled war fears, but tensions abated when Moscow pulled back the bulk of its forces after maneuvers in April.

Putin argued that to avoid tensions, Russia and the West should negotiate agreements that would safeguard each party's security interests.

"The matter is not whether to send troops or not, go to war or not, but to establish a more fair and stable development and taking into account security interests

of all international players," he replied when asked if Russia was going to invade Ukraine. "If we sincerely strive for that, no one will fear any threats."

The Russian leader noted that Russia has worried about NATO drills near its borders, pointing at a recent exercise that involved U.S. strategic bombers.

"Strategic bombers, which carry precision weapons and are capable of carrying nuclear weapons, were flying as close as 20 kilometers (12 miles) to our border," Putin said. "That represents a threat for us."

After the buildup of Russian troops near Ukraine early this year, Putin and U.S. President Joe Biden held a June summit in Geneva, where they agreed to launch a dialogue on strategic stability and cybersecurity. Putin on Tuesday hailed the cybersecurity discussions between Russian and U.S. experts, saying "just as with the pandemic, it's necessary to pool efforts to work efficiently."

Asked about Biden's bid to seek a second term, Putin said he thought it would help the U.S. political stability. The Russian leader drew a parallel with his own re-election plans.

Even though Putin hasn't decided yet whether to seek another term before his current one ends in 2024, he said the possibility of him staying on has helped Russia's stability. □

Sweden's 1st female prime minister names a center-left govt

COPENHAGEN, Denmark. (AP) — Sweden's first female prime minister, Magdalena Andersson, on Tuesday presented her one-party center-left minority government with only a few changes compared to the previous Cabinet.

Andersson, who had been Sweden's finance minister, picked Mikael Damberg to replace her in that role. Damberg previously had been home affairs minister. Andersson, the leader of the Social Democratic

party, was elected again Monday as the Scandinavian nation's head of government. She resigned last week after spending only seven hours as prime minister because a budget defeat prompted her then-coalition partner, the Greens, to quit her two-party coalition. The move followed the rejection of her government's budget proposal in favor of one presented by opposition parties, including the right-wing populist Sweden Democrats, which

are rooted in a neo-Nazi movement. On Monday, Andersson was named as prime minister even though 101 lawmakers voted in favor of her appointment and 173 were against it, with 75 abstentions. Under the Swedish Constitution, prime ministers can govern as long as a parliamentary majority — a minimum of 175 lawmakers — doesn't oppose them. Andersson kept Ann Linde as foreign minister and Peter Hultqvist as defense minister.



Swedish Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson, with her new cabinet members behind her, speaks during a press conference, in Stockholm, Tuesday, Nov. 30, 2021.

Associated Press

The Greens had held the environment and culture ministries in the previous government. Social Dem-

ocrats Annika Strandhall and Jeanette Gustafsdotter took over those two posts. □

MI6 spy chief says China, Russia, Iran top UK threat list

By JILL LAWLESS

Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — China, which is increasingly flexing its muscles around the world, is one of the biggest threats to Britain and its allies, and a “miscalculation” by Beijing could lead to war, the head of the U.K.’s foreign intelligence agency said Tuesday. MI6 chief Richard Moore said that China, Russia, Iran and international terrorism make up the “big four” security issues facing Britain’s spies in an unstable world where both countries and illicit organizations are racing to exploit fast-changing information technology.

In his first public speech since becoming head of the Secret Intelligence Service, also known as MI6, in October 2020, Moore said China is the intelligence agency’s “single greatest priority” as the Beijing leadership increasingly backs “bold and decisive action” to further its interests.

Calling China “an authoritarian state with different values than ours,” he said Beijing conducts “large-scale espionage operations” against the U.K. and its allies, tries to “distort public discourse and political decision-making” and exports technology that enables a “web of authoritarian control” around the world.

“Beijing’s growing military strength and the (Chinese Communist) party’s desire to resolve the Taiwan issue,



Richard Moore, the Chief of Britain's Secret Intelligence Service, also known as MI6, answers questions after giving his first public speech since becoming head of the organisation, at the International Institute for Strategic Studies, in London, Tuesday, Nov. 30, 2021.

Associated Press

by force if necessary, also pose a serious challenge to global stability and peace,” Moore said.

The self-ruled island of Taiwan split from mainland China in 1949, and Beijing still claims it as part of its territory.

“Beijing believes its own propaganda about Western frailties and underestimates Washington’s resolve,” Moore added. “The risk of Chinese miscalculation through overconfidence is real.”

Moore said the U.K. also continues “to face an acute threat from Russia.” He said Moscow has sponsored killing attempts, such as the poisoning of former

spy Sergei Skripal in England in 2018, mounts cyberattacks and interferes in other countries’ democratic processes.

“We and our allies and partners must stand up to and deter Russian activity which contravenes the international rules-based system,” the MI6 chief said.

“No country in Europe or beyond should be seduced into thinking that unbalanced concessions to Russia bring better behavior,” he said, noting Russia’s 2014 annexation of Crimea from Ukraine and its recent buildup of troops near the border with Ukraine.

His comments are the latest warnings from senior British

and NATO officials aimed at deterring Moscow from further incursions in Ukraine. Moore said Iran also poses a major threat, and uses the political and militant group Hezbollah — “a state within a state” — to fuel political turmoil in neighboring countries.

Turning to non-state threats, he said the fall of Afghanistan’s internationally backed government and the return to power of the Taliban were a “morale boost” to militants.

“I won’t soft soap it: The threat we face will likely grow now we have left Afghanistan,” Moore said — though he claimed it would be “overblown” to call the

surprise speed of the Taliban’s takeover a Western intelligence failure.

He argued that Britain’s spies must give up some of their deep-rooted secrecy and seek help from technology firms to win a cybersecurity arms race that is giving hostile countries and groups ever more capacity.

Moore, speaking at the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London, said the disruptive potential of artificial intelligence and other rapidly developing technologies means the spy agency has to “become more open to stay secret” in a world of destabilizing technological change.

“Our adversaries are pouring money and ambition into mastering artificial intelligence, quantum computing and synthetic biology, because they know that mastering these technologies will give them leverage,” Moore said. He used China as an example of a country that harvests data on a vast scale to gain information and power.

To keep up, he said British spies “are now pursuing partnerships with the tech community to help develop world-class technologies to solve our biggest mission problems.”

“Unlike Q in the Bond movies, we cannot do it all in-house,” Moore added, referring to the fictional MI6 gadget-maker in the 007 thrillers. □



A bag of foodstuffs provided by the U.N. agency for Palestinian refugees (UNRWA) lies in a cart as Palestinians collect food aid following a cease-fire reached after an 11-day war between Gaza’s Hamas rulers and Israel, in Gaza City, May 22, 2021.

Associated Press

AMMAN, Jordan (AP) — The head of the U.N. agen-

cy for Palestinian refugees said Tuesday it was unable

UN agency for Palestinian refugees faces funding crisis

to pay its 28,000 employees on time this month because of a major funding crisis, warning of potential cuts in vital services to millions of people amid a global pandemic. UNRWA runs schools, clinics and food distribution programs for millions of registered Palestinian refugees across the Middle East, mainly the descendants of Palestinians who fled or were driven out of what is now Israel during the 1948 war surround-

ing its creation. The 5.7 million refugees mostly live in camps that have been transformed into built-up but often impoverished residential areas in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, east Jerusalem and Gaza, as well as Jordan, Syria and Lebanon.

UNRWA head Philippe Lazzarini told reporters in Jordan that the resumption of U.S. support for the agency this year — which had been halted by the Trump

administration — was offset by a reduction in funding by other donors. The agency also went through a management crisis in 2019, when its previous head resigned amid allegations of sexual misconduct, nepotism and other abuses of authority at the agency.

Staff went on strike Monday after being informed last week that salaries would be delayed, but halted the action following mediation, Lazzarini said. □



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Barbados bids farewell to British monarchy, becomes republic

By DÁNICA COTO
Associated Press

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP) — Barbados stopped pledging allegiance to Queen Elizabeth II on Tuesday as it shed another vestige of its colonial past and became a republic for the first time in history.

Several leaders, dignitaries and artists, including Prince Charles and Rihanna, attended the ceremony that began late Monday in a popular square where the statue of Britain's Lord Nelson was removed last year amid a worldwide push to erase symbols of oppression.

Fireworks peppered the sky at midnight as Barbados officially became a republic, with screens set up across the island so people could watch the event that featured an orchestra with more than 100 steel pan players and numerous singers, poets and dancers. It was also broadcast online, prompting a flurry of excited messages from Bajans living in the U.S., Canada and beyond.

"Happy Independence Day and freedom to all," wrote one viewer.

The drive to become a republic began more than two decades ago and culminated with the island's Parliament electing its first ever president last month in a two-thirds majority vote. Barbados Governor General Sandra Mason was sworn in before dawn on Tuesday as the island marked its 55th anniversary of independence from Britain.

"As cautioned by our first prime minister ... we ought no longer to be found loitering on colonial premises," she said. "We must seek to redefine our definition of self, of state, and the Barbados brand, in a more complex, fractured



Barbados' new President Sandra Mason, center right, awards Prince Charles with the Order of Freedom of Barbados during the presidential inauguration ceremony in Bridgetown, Barbados on Tuesday Nov. 30, 2021.

Associated Press

and turbulent world. ... Our country and people must dream big dreams and fight to realize them."

Mason, 72, is an attorney and judge who also has served as ambassador to Venezuela, Colombia, Chile and Brazil. She will help Prime Minister Mia Mottley lead the wealthy Caribbean island of more than 300,000 people that is dependent on tourism, manufacturing and finance.

Barbados didn't need permission from the U.K. to become a republic, although the island will remain a member of the Commonwealth Realm. It's an event that the Caribbean hasn't experienced since the 1970s, when Guyana, Dominica and Trinidad and Tobago became republics. Barbados became independent from the United Kingdom in November 1966, more than three centuries after English settlers arrived and turned the island into a wealthy sugar colony based on the work

of hundreds of thousands of African slaves.

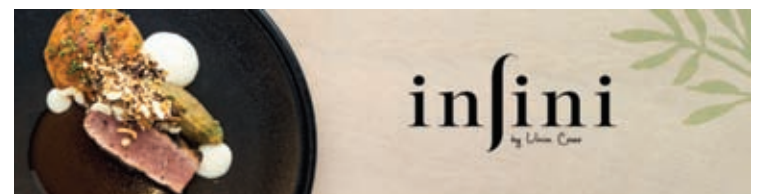
In recent decades, the island has begun distancing itself from its colonial past. In 2005, Barbados dropped the London-based Privy Council and chose the Trinidad-based Caribbean Court of Justice as its final court of appeal. Then in 2008, it proposed a referendum on the issue of becoming a republic, but it was pushed back indefinitely. Last year, Barbados announced plans to stop being a constitutional monarchy and removed a statue of British Vice-Admiral Horatio Nelson from National Heroes Square, the location of the event to celebrate becoming a republic.

"From the darkest days of our past and the appalling atrocity of slavery, which forever stains our history, the people of this island forged their path with extraordinary fortitude," said Prince Charles, who thanked Barbadian officials for inviting him and said he

has greatly admired what they've achieved. "Freedom, justice, and self determination have been your guides."

"May you continue to shine like a diamond and bring honor to your nation by your words, by your actions, and to do credit wherever you shall go. God bless you, my dear," Mottley told the singer, who placed her palm over her heart and said thank you.

As the ceremony ended, officials lowered the Queen's royal standard for the last time in Barbados. In a statement, Queen Elizabeth II congratulated the island for its "momentous day," and said she looked forward to an ongoing friendship between the two nations. □



Taste limitless possibilities at Infini, where Chef Urvin Croes and his team explores without boundaries and steps with both feet outside of the box to create his most sensational dishes yet. This meticulously designed restaurant located inside Blue Residences on scenic Eagle Beach is a chef's table concept with limited seating where diners are able to interact with the staff and other guests alike throughout the evening.

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LOCAL



The kids at Imeldahof, treated to an afternoon of fun

ORANJESTAD — A number of Aruba Time Share Association (ATSA) hotels collaborated on orchestrating an activity at Imeldahof Children's home. The organization wanted to do something special for the home's resident kids, in view of the home's 67th anniversary, and the upcoming holiday season. Two fun workshops were offered, one focusing on arts and crafts, with Creative Kids Club, under the direction of Joasy van der Biest.

The Art in A Box project, explains Joasy, is part of the Mind Your Mind concept and is designed to pro-



mote mental health in kids, teaching them to deal with their emotions. Secondly, a soccer game, sponsored by Aruba Soccer Academy, under the leadership of David Abdul, provided lots of action and interaction. The academy also donated a couple of brand new soccer cleats to the kids. Speaker Lyonel Dirks gave a well-received motivational talk and the Old Fisherman's served some delicious treats.

Playa Linda Beach Resort delivered back-packs donated by generous guests who participated in Pack

for a Purpose, a charity program run by the resort. ATSA is grateful to its sponsors, in the spirit of We Couldn't Have Done It Without You: Costa Linda Beach Resort, Casa del Mar, Amsterdam Manor Beach Resort, Playa Linda Beach Resort, Aphiarealty. The kids had a great time and were happy to participate, and be remembered. ATSA took pride in a nicely-presented, well-attended community service event, under the DREAM BIG slogan, encouraging the home's resident kids to spread their wings and aspire, in spite of difficult beginnings.

Purpose of the Imeldahof organizations

The objective of the home is to offer a temporary shelter and guidance for children and teens who, for a variety of reasons, are unable to remain in their own homes. In most cases this is until placement with their



own family or relatives or a foster family can be found. A few of the reasons are mental, psychical and sexual abuse, neglect, alcohol or drug abuse by parents. About ATSA
Vacation ownership in Aruba plays an important role with about forty percent of our total hotel accommodation inventory consisting of timesharing units. In 2022,

vacation ownership will celebrate forty-five years, as a successful segment within the island's Tourism industry. Thanks to loyal owners, the sustained year-round high occupancies of the sixteen timeshare resorts on the island, is often the envy of many Caribbean competitors, and helped sustain the island economically during difficult times. □

Foundation "Ban uni man pa cria nos muchanan" needs a helping hand Feeding the needy children of Aruba every school day

ORANJESTAD — "Ban uni man pa cria nos muchanan" is a foundation whose goal it is to provide the needy children of Aruba with a breakfast every school day. A breakfast which consists of a sandwich and a drink (juice or milk). It is an independent foundation, receiving no subsidy whatsoever from the government.

The program started at the beginning of the 2001/2002 schoolyear as a commu-

nity service project of the Facility Department of the Dr. Horacio E. Oduber Hospital, with 138 children. At the closing of the schoolyear 320 children were enrolled and this kept growing steadily each year. The 2019 schoolyear started with 650 children but as the schools reopened after the peak of the pandemic, the number of children grew to a staggering 794 children at the closing of the 2019-2020 schoolyear! These children are from 57

elementary schools all over the island. This number also includes about 70 children of the Traimerdia project, which is an after school program. For over 20 years the foundation has been providing breakfast to children of elementary schools but they are aiming on some day also be able to provide kindergartens and high schools, seeing that there are many children in need.

The breakfast program is a sponsorship program; although the sponsors are encouraged to donate Fls 25.00 per month, the actual cost per child has doubled. Leaning towards Fls. 50.00 per month. Simple arithmetic shows that the current 450 sponsors are not enough. At Fls 50.00 per month it takes 800 sponsors

to keep the program running – or a combination of sponsors and donations. Due to the effect of the pandemic and the increase in consumption prices the foundation is expecting a big deficit for the new school year of 2021-2022. If they don't manage to get sufficient funds they will have to reduce the amount of children to 600, meaning that at least 200 children won't be able to receive a breakfast this year and they would have to make the difficult decision in choosing who will stay on the list and who to remove. The foundation will keep working hard and do their utmost on getting these funds but they need the help of the community.

If you feel inspired by this

article, do not just turn the page but act upon it. You can help and support this wonderful foundation by making a donation to their bank account at the following banks: CMB 22559501, RBC 43.65.011 and at the Aruba Bank 2516290190.

For more information, or to receive a transcript of the Chamber of Commerce, the By-Laws or the latest Financial Report (2020-2021) of the foundation, please contact Mrs. Rachelle Roos at +297-527-4000 or Mrs. Felicia Halman at +297- 527-4750 or Mr. John Fun (President) at +297-527-4711 or at +297-699-4330.

Your support will help the children of this program at least have a breakfast every day. □



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Aqua Grill restaurant:
The taste of New England with Caribbean flair

ORANJESTAD — One thing is for certain: Chef Scott Scheuerman and his team are famous for getting people hooked, just like the fish on your plate. You will get the taste of home fused with Caribbean while dining in elegance. Scheuerman will tell how Aqua Grill established its name since opening in 2002, and why it reaped accolades from such prestigious travel publications as Fodor's, who says, "This hip restaurant is heaven on earth for seafood lovers, who will find fresh fish galore..." Now is your chance to taste Aqua Grill's NEW seasonal menu and create a lifetime culinary memory.

'A Scheuer thing'

Secretly, we all know that the success of a restaurant begins in the kitchen. That is where the chef creates his magic and for Aqua Grill the culinary team has won an assortment of awards for their continuous delivery of 'haute-cuisine del mar.' Classic seafood is mingled with contemporary ideas resulting in surprising dishes that soon made the restaurant a must-dine, confirmed by established travel media specialists like Fodor's and Frommer's.

American-born Scheuerman, executive chef of Aqua Grill, is thrilled about 'his restaurant'. "We started out as a New England style seafood restaurant, patterned after Boston style. But we quickly blended into some Caribbean, local flair... if you will. We do still offer the traditional New England dishes like whole Maine lobster, northern seafood plates like the salmon, tuna and swordfish. We buy also from the local fisherman to offer Caribbean dishes like snapper and grouper which are number one sellers

in our restaurant being the most prevalent local fishes. Catches like wahoo, mahi mahi and brasil are welcome too, anything that comes out of the water we embrace."

Fresh import from Boston

Aqua Grill flies in their own shipments on a weekly basis mostly from Boston because the price quality balance is the best, says the chef. "We are unique in this. Number one priority is buying fresh, we mean not frozen. Our original concept is New England seafood and we stick to that concept. They have a wonderful assortment of oysters and lobsters as well." Aqua Grill also offers international fusion type of menu items; actually all you wish for is there. A very balanced menu awaits you. "And we have options for meat lovers and vegetarians/vegans too. We, however, do not mix it up too much because we believe we do not want to lose our identity as a seafood restaurant," Scheuerman adds.

Sublime menu

Now is the time to indulge in Aqua Grill's dinner experience. The established restaurant offers a sensational menu. We present to you a Raw Bar with among others fresh Oysters on the half Shell, Littleneck Clams, Peruvian Ceviche and Lobster Salad. Steamed Dumplings and Prawns or Steamed Mussels seduce you from the open view kitchen. After that continue your gastronomic trip to heaven with the house specialties like Main Lobster, steamed or broiled or maybe you crave for the best Alaska King Crab Legs you have ever tasted?

You haven't reached your destination yet



because there are more main course options to blow you away: Seared Chilean Sea Bass, Cioppino or Blackened Tuba are just some to mention.

Take a pick out of Aqua Grill's delicious desserts to finally conclude yes, this beats it all. We will be back for more.

About the place

The glow of Aqua Grill is obvious by entering the restaurant. The eclectic of a modern and a traditional New England fish house style appeal and the open-view kitchen adds to the thrill. It's clear as water; for sublime seafood in Aruba go to the island's premier seafood restaurant: Aqua Grill. This seafood-heaven place is already a statement for years with a consistency in upscale dining and top-shelf service. If you like to savor your seafood, this is your dive in. We promise you will get hooked.

Aqua Grill

J.E. Irausquin Blvd. 374

Phone: +297-586-5900

Fax: +297-586-5901

Facebook – Instagram – website

AQUA GRILL



Passenger flow control at check-in for US-bound passengers

Aruba Airport Departure Check-in Times Quadrant by Group.

GROUP	YELLOW	BLUE	ORANGE
DEPARTURE TIME	Between 10:00 - 15:00	Between 15:00 - 17:00	Between 17:00 - 18:00
CHECK-IN	Before 14:00	Between 12:00 - 16:00	After 14:00

Note: For check-in times, please maintain this at 3 hours prior scheduled departure time.
 Period December 1, 2021 – March 12, 2022.
 If flight is delayed, please maintain your scheduled departure time.



ORANJESTAD - Aruba Airport Authority N.V. (AAA), the company that manages and operates Aeropuerto Internacional Reina Beatrix (AUA Airport) informs all US departing passengers that starting December 1, 2021 AUA Airport will introduce "Passenger Flow Control" at the check in

terminal for all passengers to the USA.

Based on agreements made by the Aruban Government with the US CBP in Washington recently, ongoing construction activities in the terminal building and also Covid restrictions, AUA Airport has created a

staged approach to allow passengers to enter the check in facilities and the terminal for processing.

The Passenger Flow Control concept entails that passenger are allowed to enter the check in facilities based on separate groups (Yellow, Blue and Orange)

established by the scheduled airline departure times. Passengers will thus receive a dedicated timeslot to enter the terminal as indicated in table below.

This dedicated timeslot is determined for visitors based on the information provided in the ED (Electronic Disembarkation) Card where information on the departure flight will also have to be submitted. Residents travelling out of Aruba to the US should take their scheduled departure time into account to determine at what time they are allowed to check-in (not earlier than 3 hours before that time of departure). The Passenger Flow Control is introduced with the intention to prevent passengers arriving (too) early at AUA Airport for check-in. This will be in place for the winter season starting Decem-

ber 1, 2021, until March 12, 2022.

AUA Airport will have ambassadors at the entry doors to actively control the time slots per passenger. Early passengers will have to wait outside for their correct time slot.

With this Passenger Flow Control AUA Airport hopes to better manage the processing of passengers at the different check points inside the terminal areas and therefore also contribute to shorter lines and waiting times resulting in a much safer environment and better service levels for all passengers. AAA counts on the active participation and control of all stakeholders in this process to ensure that passengers are dropped off at the airport "in time" as per their assigned time slots for check-in of flights to the US. □

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Millennial Money: Sustain generosity beyond the holidays

By **AMRITA JAYAKUMAR** of **NerdWallet**

2020 asked a lot from us. We faced new challenges and reckoned with old ones, and often the world's problems collided with our own individual needs. Help — whether in donations or even just attention — might've been hard to give when you required some yourself.

If your finances are in better shape this giving season, you can be more strategic with your dollars. The same issues you felt strongly about last year may not be on your priority list now. Perhaps the reverse is true — you're more determined than ever to support the causes you care about.

Here are tips on prioritizing causes, supporting them effectively and making room in your wallet for sustained giving.

YOUR PRIORITIES CAN SHAPE YOUR PLAN

Write down the two or three causes that matter most to you, whether it's a global issue like slowing down climate change or something closer to home, like supporting your local animal shelter. This is the start of your giving plan. If you're anything like me, a giving plan may serve as a guidepost for your dollars when tragic news events clamor for your attention or injured puppy photos on your social media feed play on your emotions. I end up making impulsive donations, which are helpful and feel good at the moment, but they're easy to forget and don't make a lasting impact.

You might also go bigger and really focus on your values in the giving plan, using them as fuel to be more intentional and proactive with your efforts beyond the holidays.

Think about the kind of philanthropist you want to be in 2022 and then plan for it, says Holly Belkot, manager of strategic giving at GlobalGiving, a nonprofit based in Washington, D.C., that supports other nonprofits by connecting them to donors and companies. Planning doesn't just ap-



A shelter dog looks out from a crate after having been unloaded from a cargo plane, Tuesday, April 20, 2021, at Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport in Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

Associated Press

ply to monetary donations or time spent volunteering. Say you care about climate change. Belkot suggests setting yourself a goal of learning something new about the effects of environmental damage in January, watching a documentary about deforestation in February and so on.

A SMALL, REGULAR DONATION CAN MAKE A BIG IMPACT

One powerful way to champion your favorite cause is through small, recurring donations.

"Recurring donations are the lifeblood of nonprofits," says Soraya Alexander, chief operating officer at Classy, a digital fundraising platform for nonprofits based in San Diego, California. Alexander says the majority of one-time donors do not come back to support a nonprofit, and it's a resource-intensive process for the organization to find new ones.

For millennials, she says, who are both passionate about sustained giving and already used to Netflix-style subscription payments, recurring donations are an easy way to make a big impact. "Ten dollars a month is going to have higher payoff for the organization and should make it easier for you to give a greater amount than you might normally feel comfortable

with."

Just as a monthly budget allows you to plan your

spending, these donations allow nonprofits to plan operations for the year. Since

November delivers another hit to sinking consumer confidence

By **MARTIN CRUTSINGER**
AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. consumer confidence fell to a nine-month low in November, clipped by rising prices and concern about the coronavirus.

The Conference Board reported Tuesday that its consumer confidence index dropped to a reading of 109.5, down from 111.6 in October. It was the lowest reading since the index stood at 95.2 in February.

The survey was completed on Nov. 19 and would not include the ramifications of omicron, a new variant of the coronavirus that has begun to spread with few solid answers about the damage it might do to the U.S. and global economies. Even before the omicron variant appeared, consumer optimism was being tested by price spikes across the board, particularly for gasoline and food. The Conference Board's present situation index, which measures consumers' assessment of current business and labor conditions, fell to 142.5, down



A shopper emerges from a Kohl's store on Black Friday, on Nov. 26, 2021, in Everett, Mass.

Associated Press

from 145.5 in October. The expectations index, based on consumers' outlook for income, business and labor market conditions, fell to 87.6 in November from 89.0 in October.

The Conference Board said that concerns about rising prices and to a lesser degree, lingering worries about the delta variant, were the primary drivers of the November decline.

But economists believe rising prices and any jolt from the omicron variant will not

many organizations automatically sign up regular donors to receive newsletters or project updates, recurring donations also allow you to stay engaged with the group.

HOW TO CHOOSE WHICH ORGANIZATION TO SUPPORT

You've got your giving plan in hand and know the importance of recurring donations. Now how do you actually choose where to send your money?

"It can be really overwhelming when you care about something but you don't know what the 'right' nonprofit is to support," Belkot says.

To solve this conundrum, GlobalGiving selects a handful of nonprofits working on the same issue and groups them together into a "fund" that individuals can donate to. □

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CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS 39 Makes

1 Spits out smooth

6 Parting 40 Be

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29 Fitting

32 Field

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33 "Aw,

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34 Like ice

36 Singer

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37 Namely

38 Greedy

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Yesterday's answer

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one sites 28 Taunts

3 Lift 11 Complain 29 Following

4 Cellar loudly 30 Utah city

5 Mud bath 15 Chips buy 31 Took to

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34			35				36		
37						38			
39						40			
41						42			

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's. X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

12-1 CRYPTOQUOTE

Y P G I C J O V H Z O O : I H G J Z Y O P

V H K Z X D : U Z K J O I Z F L J V S U P L :

U F J P X Q V H H X P : P X P K D V H

X H X P . Y P X E Z K J X U F Z X A O I X

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: THE DECLINE OF LITERATURE INDICATES THE DECLINE OF A NATION; THE TWO KEEP PACE IN THEIR DOWNWARD TENDENCY. JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE

Cognizant CEO discusses fierce battle for technology talent



This photo provided by Cognizant Technology Solutions shows CEO Brian Humphries. Computer chips aren't the only thing in short supply as the world emerges from the pandemic.

Associated Press

By MICHAEL LIEDTKE
AP Technology Writer

BERKELEY, Calif. (AP) — Digital services have become more important than ever since the pandemic began in early 2020, and that's meant big business for major technology companies. But there's also a downside to the tech boom. It's making it more difficult than ever to recruit and retain software developers and other tech workers who can demand more money and other perks amid wide competition for their talents — and who can simply leave if they don't get them.

Cognizant Technology Solutions CEO Brian Humphries is grappling with the challenge while running one of the industry's largest outsourcing firms.

The Teaneck, New Jersey, company has been hiring rapidly during the past year to increase its workforce to roughly 318,000 employees as of September 30, a 12% increase from roughly 283,000 at the same time in the previous year. But the attrition rate of departing employees stood at 33% in the July-September quarter,

higher than the company's peers.

Humphries recently discussed the current recent imbalance in the technology labor market with The Associated Press.

Q: How difficult is it to hire tech workers right now?

A: There is a demand level unlike anything we have ever seen in many, many years. And that demand increase is ultimately fueled by digital acceleration.

And every company in the world, regardless of the industry, is pushing toward digital business models. So that is ultimately leading to this situation that are faced with today.

Q: Why has Cognizant been having abnormally high attrition rates?

A: There is an unprecedented battle for (technology) talent, reflective of the fact that the market has shifted massively toward digital transformation. It's just an industrywide phenomenon, and having an employee value proposition is more important than ever before.

Q: What kind of employee value proposition?

A: The next generation of

workers really want to work for a company that has a purpose, a company that brings value to the world, not just a anonymous corporate entity that's capitalistic in nature.

I spend an hour every day with five employees to hear them out. What's on their minds, what's working, what's not, how do they feel about our communication, about our strategy, etcetera.

Q: Is the remote working trend an advantage or disadvantage for your company?

H: To a certain extent, that hasn't helped retention of employees because perhaps when people are together, commuting together, sharing cafeterias, being in work meetings together, it can engender a sense of loyalty.

The work-from-home environment can certainly reduce commute times, which is good for a employee's well being. And history has shown that sometimes the (representation) of female employees diminishes in certain societies like India as they move further up the pyramid.

Working from home can be very positive from a diversity inclusion point of view because it can enable us to keep female talent in the workforce longer and, hopefully, give them opportunity to rise through the ranks. I am quite optimistic that this new hybrid environment will be good for the environment and inclusion.

Q: Is the debate over the COVID-19 vaccine complicating things in terms of hiring and retention?

A: It is certainly a consideration. We as a company believe in vaccinations, to be very clear, but in the same vein the way we are conducting our day-to-day business these days is we encourage employees who are not vaccinated to not come to the office. So those that choose not to be vaccinated will continue to work from home at Cognizant. □

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1BR WK#46 room#71
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Eagle beach
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Room #1566
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johnnypaesch@gmail.com

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HTTA
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Eagle Beach
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1 Bedroom week 47 room #214
Garden view \$ 5 K each
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HTTA
Aruba Divi Phoenix
Palm Beach
2BR 2bath Penthouse
Week#49 Room#770
30weeks remain \$18 K
2BR week 50 room#630/631
32weeks remain \$18 K
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johnnypaesch@gmail.com

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HTTA
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1 BR Deluxe week # 48
room # 2552
Ocean front \$ 5 K
1 BR week 49 room # 2502
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HTTA
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HTTA
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Eagle Beach
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1 BR week #50 room # 316 A
Price : \$ 5 K each
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HTTA
Condo for Sale
Gold Coast
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2 Bed Ocean view \$8,000
2 Bed Garden view \$6,000
3 Bed Ocean view \$13,000

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2 Bed Ocean view \$18,000
1 Bed ocean front \$13,000
1 Bed ocean view \$11,000
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San Nicolas:
Aloe Tel. 584 4606

OTHER

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Blood Bank Aruba 587 0002
Urgent Care 586 0448
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EMERGENCY

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Oranjestad	527 3140
Noord	527 3200
Sta. Cruz	527 2900
San Nicolas	584 5000
Police Tipline	11141
Ambulancia	911
Fire Dept.	115
Red Cross	582 2219

TAXI SERVICES

Taxi Tas	587 5900
Prof. Taxi	588 0035
Taxi D.T.S.	587 2300
Taxi Serv. Aruba	583 3232
A1 Taxi Serv.	280 2828

TRAVEL INFO

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American Airlines	582 2700
Avianca	588 0059
Jet Blue	588 2244
Surinam	582 7896

AID FOUNDATIONS

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Narcotics Anonymous
Tel. 583 8989

Fundacion Contra Violencia
Relacional Tel. 583 5400

Centre for Diabetes
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Map showing location of TODAY BONDIA in downtown Aruba, near the bus terminal and various streets like Weststraat, Schepstraat, and L.Q. Smith Boulevard.



Marilyn Manson attends the 9th annual "Home for the Holidays" benefit concert in Los Angeles, on Dec. 10, 2019.

By **ANDREW DALTON**

AP Entertainment Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Media storage devices and other items were seized as a search warrant was served on the home of

Associated Press

rockers Marilyn Manson in a months-long investigation of sexual assault and domestic violence, authorities said Tuesday.

Manson, 52, whose legal name is Brian Hugh War-

Home of Marilyn Manson searched in sex assault investigation

ner, was not at the Hollywood-area home when investigators searched it early Monday morning, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department said in a statement.

The Sheriff's Department began investigating Manson early this year after reports of sexual assault and domestic violence between 2009 and 2011 in West Hollywood, where he lived at the time.

The women involved were not identified, but several women have publicly alleged this year that they were physically, sexually and emotionally abused

by Manson around the time of the incidents under investigation, and some have filed lawsuits.

Manson's attorney Howard E. King declined immediate comment. Manson has denied the allegations, and King has called them "provably false."

The 52-year-old shock rocker's former fiancée, "Westworld" actor Evan Rachel Wood, named him as her abuser for the first time in an Instagram post in February.

Manson called Wood's statements "horrible distortions of reality."

In May, "Game of Thrones"

actor Esmé Bianco sued Marilyn Manson in federal court, alleging sexual, physical and emotional abuse. Bianco says that Manson violated human trafficking law by bringing her to California from England for non-existent roles in music videos and movies. Manson deprived Bianco of food and sleep, locked her in a bedroom, whipped her, gave her electric shocks and threatened to enter her room and rape her during the night, the lawsuit alleges. Bianco's attorney said she also was interviewed by law enforcement. □

NBC hopes the sun will come out as it mounts 'Annie Live!'

By **MARK KENNEDY**

AP Entertainment Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — There's a famous saying in showbiz: "Never work with children or animals." NBC is wisely ignoring that as it mounts a live version of the hit Broadway musical "Annie."

The tale of the spunky young orphan with her dog Sandy set during the Depression will be NBC's first live musical since its triumphant "Jesus Christ Superstar Live in Concert" in 2018. "Annie Live!" airs Thursday. "It is a musical about hope and optimism, and it couldn't come at a better time," said Neil Meron, who has served as executive producer on all of NBC's live musicals.

Twelve-year-old newcomer Celina Smith has the title role, backed by co-stars Harry Connick Jr. as Annie's rescuer, Daddy Warbucks, and Taraji P. Henson as the orphanage's callous Miss Hannigan. Nicole Scherzinger, Tituss Burgess and Megan Hilty also are in the cast.

Henson admits to being nervous but says she needs to be: "Nerves mean you're alive and you're in the moment. It's not a bad thing. Nerves are good," she advises. "Go out there with shaky knees and shaky hands and use it."

The musical premiered on



This image released by NBC shows the cast of "Annie Live!," from left, Taraji P. Henson as Miss Hannigan, Tituss Burgess as Rooster Hannigan, Nicole Scherzinger as Grace Farrell, Celina Smith as Annie, and Harry Connick, Jr. as Daddy Warbucks.

Associated Press

Broadway in 1977 and was revived in 1997 and 2012. The 1977 original show won the Tony as best musical and ran for 2,300 performances, inspiring tours and revivals that never went out of style.

"Annie" has been adapted many times for the screen, including a 1982 film version featuring Carol Burnett, another in 1999 featuring Kathy Bates and one in 2014 starring Quvenzhané Wallis.

The musical contains musical gems like "Tomorrow" and "It's the Hard Knock

Life." Martin Charnin's lyrics, which earned him and songwriter Charles Strouse a Tony for best score in 1977, are playful and moving: "You're never fully dressed/without a smile" and "No one cares for you a smidge/when you're in an orphanage." Strouse, now 93, attended rehearsals and hugged the new Annie.

"The show was written in the wake of the Vietnam War and the Nixon administration, and I think these guys were consciously trying to do something uplift-

ing at a dark time in the country," said Bob Greenblatt, who oversaw live musicals during the years he ran NBC and has teamed up with Meron to executive produce "Annie Live!"

The creative team has gone back to the first Broadway show to add in songs that movie versions have cut. Meron says they are honoring the roots of the original show. "We've basically gone back to the original Broadway version and more or less have followed the structure of that show, adding back songs

that no other film production ever used."

Tony Award-winner Emilio Sosa has designed the costumes, and the choreography will be led by Tony-winner Sergio Trujillo, who says he saw the 1982 film version but otherwise came to it like a blank slate.

"I began to discover what a gem it is," said Trujillo, whose Broadway work includes "Ain't Too Proud" and "On Your Feet!" He adds: "It has been one of the most surprising experiences in my career thus far because I have just let myself go and be carefree in the room."

NBC has found success with live musical events. Previous productions include 2013's "The Sound of Music Live!," 2014's "Peter Pan Live!," 2015's "The Wiz Live!," 2016's "Hairspray Live!" and 2018's "Jesus Christ Superstar Live in Concert." Other networks have gotten in on the act, with Fox doing "A Christmas Story" and "Grease Live!" and ABC's "The Little Mermaid Live!"

Each has tried to evolve the viewing experience: "The Sound of Music Live!" was done in a movie style, and "Peter Pan Live!" gave producers license to be more fantastical. Over time, live audiences have been added. □



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Even a little Tiger is better than no Tiger at all

By **DOUG FERGUSON**

AP Golf Writer

NASSAU, Bahamas (AP) —

The only certainty about Tiger Woods is that he won't be playing very much golf, and that's if he decides it's worth trying to scale a mountain taller than all the previous ones.

"Making progress," he wrote to accompany a video of his swing he posted on Twitter two weeks ago. "I'm so far from that," he said Tuesday when talking about taking on Jon Rahm and Collin Morikawa and Rory McIlroy in the biggest events on the toughest golf courses.

Woods walked into the room at Albany Golf Club without a noticeable limp as he climbed onto the stage and took his seat behind a microphone. He left the stage a little more gingerly, and conceded his leg and back were aching just sitting there.

"We all want to see him back. We all want to see

him healthy and playing like the Tiger Woods we've seen for 20 years," Harris English said.

Those days were fading with age, and they probably are gone due to a badly damaged right leg stemming from a car crash in the Los Angeles suburbs some 10 months ago. Woods mentioned the possibility of amputation in the early stages of being hospitalized.

This is a slow road back before he can even think about the climb.

So much chatter is on the Masters in April, without consideration that Augusta National might be the toughest course to walk of any tournament he plays. Woods said he would love to return to the British Open at St. Andrews, where the steepest climb is crossing the Swilcan Bridge.

Woods has ruled out being a full-time player, and the argument can be made he already was headed in

that direction. He played only 13 events on the PGA Tour in 2019, the last time he was healthy and the world wasn't in the throes of a pandemic.

The best-case scenario is a schedule geared around the majors, similar to Ben Hogan's in the 1950s after his near-fatal car accident. Hogan was 37 when he won the 1950 U.S. Open. Woods turns 46 at the end of next month.

Would it be enough to satisfy his legion of fans for him to play only a few tournaments a year?

The short is yes. Because even a little Tiger is better than no Tiger at all.

"The PGA Tour is in such a good spot with these young guys. Tiger is only going to help draw more fans to the game when he's playing," English said. "We haven't had him for the last year and it's been doing great. He got us to where we're at. Any time he can play just adds interest and adds



Tiger Woods holds his first press conference since his Feb. 23 car crash in Los Angeles at the Hero World Challenge golf tournament in Nassau, Bahamas, Tuesday, Nov. 30, 2021.


Associated Press

intrigue and puts golf in the national media."

Abraham Ancer might become a footnote in history as the last player to face Woods in match play. It was Sunday singles at Royal Melbourne in the 2019 Presidents Cup, and Woods hit the ball as crisply as he did all year and won on the 16th hole.

In a loss, it was a special memory for Ancer.

"I was happy I got to experience him at a high level in a high-pressure match. It was cool for me and I learned a lot," Ancer said. Equally memorable was the first time Ancer played in the same tournament as Woods, at Torrey Pines in 2018, and he wound up in the group behind him starting the final round on the back nine. Ancer recalled seeing "mayhem." □



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Scherzer, Seager get big-money deals ahead of CBA expiration

By **RONALD BLUM**
AP Baseball Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Right-hander Max Scherzer agreed to a record-setting \$130 million, three-year contract with the New York Mets and shortstop Corey Seager struck a \$325 million, 10-year deal with the Texas Rangers on Monday as players and teams rushed to reach agreements before an expected lockout.

The pair are among eight players who in recent days have agreed to contracts totalling \$1.268 billion in guaranteed pay.

Both Scherzer and Seager are leaving the high-spending Los Angeles Dodgers for free agent riches elsewhere with teams that have aggressively added players before what likely will be Major League Baseball's first work stoppage since 1995.

The five-year collective bargaining agreement expires at 11:59 p.m. EST Wednesday, and owners are expected to announce a signing freeze.

Scherzer's \$43.33 million average salary under Mon-



Los Angeles Dodgers shortstop Corey Seager, left, tags out Atlanta Braves' Eddie Rosario on an attempted steal during the third inning in Game 5 of baseball's National League Championship Series, Oct. 21, 2021, in Los Angeles.

Associated Press

day's agreement is 20% higher than the previous mark, the \$36 million Yankees pitcher Gerrit Cole is averaging in his \$324 million, nine-year contract with New York.

Scherzer would have the right to opt out after the 2023 season to become a free agent once again. Scherzer also receives a full no-trade provision, requiring his approval for any deals. The agreement also includes award bonuses.

A three-time Cy Young Award winner and eight-

time All-Star, the 37-year-old was 15-4 with a 2.46 ERA last season for the Washington Nationals and Dodgers, who acquired him on July 30.

He struck out 236 and walked 36 in 179 1/3 innings, averaging 94.4 mph with his fastball in the final season of a \$210 million, seven-year contract that included \$105 million in deferred money payable from 2022-28.

New York also has pending deals with center fielder Starling Marte (\$78 million

for four years), outfielder/first baseman Mark Canha and infielder Eduardo Escobar, all contingent on successful physicals. The Mets could emerge as the top spender following their first full offseason under owner Steven Cohen, who bought the team in November 2020 from the Wilpon and Katz families in a deal that valued the Mets at a baseball-record \$2.42 billion. Seager, like Scherzer, is represented by Scott Boras, who in the 2019-20 offseason negotiated more than \$1.2 billion in contracts. Both deals are pending physicals, and details on each were provided by a person familiar with the agreement who spoke on condition of anonymity because neither was final. Seager was the World Series MVP in 2020 and a two-time All-Star in his seven seasons with the Los Angeles Dodgers. He hit .306 with 16 homers and 57 RBIs in 95 games this year, when he broke a finger on his right hand after getting hit by a pitch May 15 and missed 2 1/2 months.

Seager's total dollars match Giancarlo Stan-

ton for the fifth-highest in baseball behind Mike Trout (\$426.5 million for 12 years), Mookie Betts (\$365 million for 12 years), Fernando Tatis Jr. (\$340 million for 14 years) and Bryce Harper (\$330 million for 13 years).

Texas committed \$500 million over two days to middle infielders, following an agreement Sunday on a \$175 million, seven-year contract with Gold Glove second baseman Marcus Semien, also subject to a successful physical.

Other nine-figure deals in recent days:

— Wander Franco, a 20-year-old infielder with just 70 games in the major leagues, agreed to a \$182 million, 11-year contract with Tampa Bay.

— Right-hander José Berrios, who could have become a free agent next offseason under the current rules, agreed with Toronto at \$131 million over seven years.

— Free agent right-hander Kevin Gausman agreed to a \$110 million, five-year contract with the Blue Jays, pending a successful physical. □

Swiss officials warn COVID-19 rules threaten sports events

BERN, Switzerland (AP) — Olympic officials in Switzerland urged the federal government Tuesday to exempt international athletes and officials from new quarantine rules that threaten the hosting of World Cup events in winter sports. People arriving from the rising number of countries on Switzerland's red list must enter mandatory 10-day quarantine periods to protect against COVID-19 and the aggres-

sive omicron variant. The red list now includes Canada, where women's Alpine skiers — including former World Cup champions Mikaela Shiffrin of the United States and Lara Gut-Behrami of Switzerland — are currently competing at Lake Louise. They are scheduled to travel next to Switzerland for two super-G races at upscale St. Moritz. "If travel restrictions and quarantine rules are maintained, the orga-

nization of international sporting events in Switzerland will be in danger, if not impossible," said Jürg Stahl, the president of Switzerland's national Olympic committee. Switzerland is also due to host cross-country skiing at Davos, ski jumping at Engelberg and ski cross races at Arosa in the next three weeks. Swiss Olympic warned of difficulties under the current rules for athletes who "can no longer practice their



Switzerland's Lara Gut-Behrami competes during a women's World Cup giant slalom ski race Saturday, Nov. 27, 2021, Killington, Vt.

Associated Press

profession," plus sports clubs and the wider economy, such as hotels and restaurants. □